



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/043,023	01/08/2002	Willys Choi	67,200-616	6137

7590 03/22/2004

TUNG & ASSOCIATES
Suite 120
838 W. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302

EXAMINER

PHAM, HOA Q

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2877

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/043,023	CHOI, WILLYS	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hoa Q. Pham	2877	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13,15-27 and 29-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13,15-27 and 29-32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-13, 15-27, and 29-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Urayama et al (JP-40-5217881 A) in view of Fitzsimmons et al (6,493,078) and Nakano et al (6,613,588).

Regarding claims 1, 14-16, 17, and 29-30; Urayama et al discloses a resist coater with an evaluation unit for detecting dust quantity of resist film on the wafer which has all the features of the present invention except that the coater cup is comprises a transparent material; however, such a feature is known in the art, for example, as taught by Fitzsimmons et al. Fitzsimmon et al, from the same field of the endeavor, teaches that the a part of the coater bowl (105) is made of transparent material (transparent window)(120,220,32) so that the detector (131) is located outside of the chamber for monitoring the substrate (115) (figures 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and column 4, lines 29-31 and column 6, lines 40-42). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Urayama et al by using a transparent material for the coater bowl as taught by Fitzsimmons et al so that the light source and the detector are located outside of the coater. The rationale for this modification would have arisen from the fact that by using a transparent material or

window for the coater and positioning the detector and light source outside of the coater would prevent the damages of the light source and detector due to the heat, dirt and moisture inside the coater.

Urayama et al does not teach that the coating device is automatically terminated when the amount of the dust is exceeded a predetermined level. However, such a feature is known in the art as taught by Nakano et al. Nakano et al teaches that the plasma processing device with a particle detection optical system in which the etching operation can be halted if the total number of particles generated exceeds a reference value (column 9, lines 21-27 and column 18, lines 44-52). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to include in Urayama et al a terminating system as taught by Nakano et al. The rationale for this modification would have arisen from the fact that using such system would alert the operator know when the processing chamber need to be cleaned or maintenance.

Regarding claim 3, the laser source is attached to the coater cup (see figure 1).

Regarding claims 4 and 18, see Urayama's abstract for resist coater.

Regarding claims 2, 5-7,12-13, 19-21, 26-27, see Urayama's abstract for a laser source (10) and a laser detector (11). Thus, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an edge emitting laser or a solid-state semiconductor light emitter because they would function in the same manner. A substitution one for another is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art.

Regarding claims 8 and 22, see figure 1 of Urayama for spindle (15).

Regarding claims 9 and 23, see Urayama's abstract for detecting dust.

Regarding claims 10, 11, and 24-25, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the particle detection system of Urayama et al for detecting the photoresist dust as a result of a wafer spin coating operation because the device would function in the same manner.

Regarding claims 31 and 32, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include in Urayama one or more additional coater bowl if addition inspection is desired.

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-13, 15-27, 29-32 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hoa Q. Pham whose telephone number is (571) 272-2426. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30AM to 6 PM, Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frank G. Font can be reached on (571) 272-2415. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2877

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hoa Q. Pham', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Hoa Q. Pham
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2877

HP
March 11, 2004